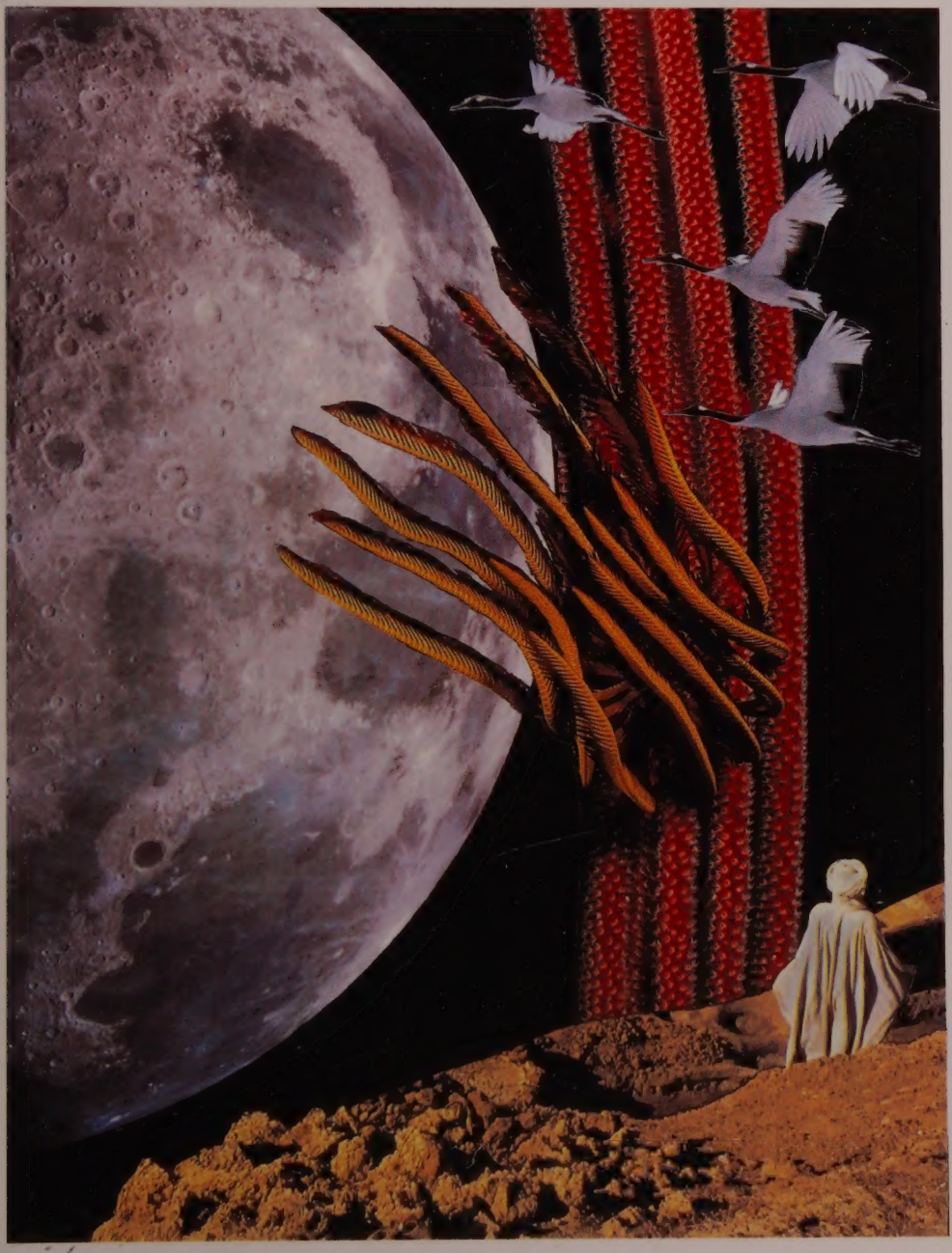
POEMS

DANIEL ABDAL-HAYY MOORE

RAMADAN SONNETS



RAMADAN SONNETS

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Burnt Heart/Ode to the War Dead

This Body of Black Light Gone Through the Diamond

The Ramadan Sonnets

The Blind Beekeeper

THEATER

The Floating Lotus Magic Opera Company

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Ramadan Sonnets (Ecstatic Exchange revised edition)

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RAMADAN SONNETS

poems

MAY 9, – JUNE 11, 1986

Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore

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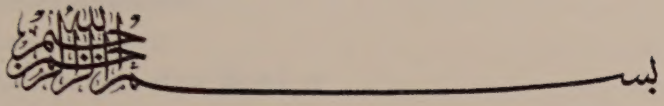

With all praise to Allah, The Divine Reality
Who through all ages has sent to humankind
prophets, saints and saviors,
and their blessed epitome, His Prophet Muhammad,
peace and blessings be upon him,
who bore His revelation,
and whose equanimity and compassion
is our noble model
and the perfect healer of our souls.

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FINAL SONNET

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

RAMADAN IS THE yearly month of fasting that Muslims all over the world practice at roughly the same time, give or take a day or two. It is a global rite of self-denial, followed by a global celebration of the Creator's bounty with a day of feasting at month's end.. The fast consists of refraining from eating or drinking from dawn to sunset every day of the month, having eaten a breakfast before dawn and breaking the fast at sunset with water and a few dates, the sunset prayer, then a full meal. It is a superlatively spiritual event, with secrets and hidden gifts. Although definitely a time of hardship, it bonds Muslims to each other and to their Generous Provider, and gives them deeper inner strength. It is a time of awakened awareness.

People who are not Muslims but who know Muslims who fast Ramadan might consider the fast brutal, when in fact it is a time of peace. They might also be amazed that adherents are so honorable, fasting even when many miles away from home, when there is "no one watching." In this way it is also a test of faith, since it is the one basic Pillar of Islam that cannot be witnessed by others, and in its fulfillment on trust affirms an individual's integrity before God.

It is a mystery that we forgo eating, drinking (as well as smoking, sexual intercourse, and a few other minor restraints) during daylight hours, the usual time of robust human activity, then the night becomes a time of satisfying the senses, in a purified way, eating and drinking while maintaining the concentration on God in the depths of night that one had during the brightness of day. The great Sufi theologian, al-Ghazali, may Allah be pleased with him, designated the daily denial of food and drink as the essential basis of the fast, but described the more austere fulfillment of the fast as being the avoidance of any thoughts entertained or acted on other than thoughts of God.

The first hairline brightness of dawn and the final dipping of the sun below the horizon at sunset are the natural markers of the fast, signaling when to stop eating and when to start, as are the difficult sightings of the new moon hidden in the twilight sky that indicate the beginning and end of the lunar month itself. Going by lunar months instead of solar, and making the chore of actually sighting the new moon a strangely difficult one, it seems that God explicitly wants to underscore to us a certain fragility and ambiguity in our mortal life, to which the absolute and profound purity of the fast itself is in stark contrast. Our days are made suddenly quite simple, with the meals removed from them, and our hunger is a constant reminder to us of God's benevolence over us. For the fast locates us in time and space, on earth, among phenomena, in order to free us from phenomena altogether so that our hearts and souls might concentrate more fully on the Unseen Reality of God. It is truly a wonder, full of mystery – that such a seemingly little thing as not eating or drinking can have such a deep inner resonance, and that, though physiological, it should be a shared spiritual experience by all the Muslims on earth, an existential, objective task (like the five prayers are, like the Hajj to Mecca is) that is meant to bring about a Humanity of Light.

At the beginning of Ramadan, 1406, according to the Muslim calendar (May, 1986), living in California by the Pacific Ocean, having experienced about sixteen Ramadans up to that point (in such remote places as England, Morocco, Spain and Nigeria), I made a prayer and intention to open myself to inspiration to write at least one poem every day or night of the fast as a poetic record, no matter what my state. The title *"Ramadan Sonnets"* came to me, and I liked the clash and melding of cultural meanings in the pairing of the words "Ramadan" and "sonnets," there being no sonnet form as we know it in Arabic, nor in any of the usual Muslim languages such as Urdu or Farsi – their own strict, traditional forms being even more exacting than most of those for English in regards to rhyme and meter, though their languages offer more possibilities for rhyme than English. The undertaking was meant as an artful focus for meditation, a way of establishing a heart-space for the very personal experience of Ramadan itself, charting my own ups and downs, as the month progressed.

At the end of the month I had a poem for almost each day with a few lapses, and in many cases two or three, some long, some short (one only three lines long), and only a scattering of poems in traditional western sonnet form – although I hasten to point out that "*sonnet*" really just means "*little song*." Most of these poems were written in the Open Form of contemporary American poetics, punctuated by occasional formal sonnets that have rhyme and meter and thus act almost as sung refrains.

Not always a spiritual meditation, nor often even what *should* be felt and achieved in the fast (I was striving for some reality of feeling and experience), the resulting *Ramadan Sonnets* are a poetic record of the month, its small epiphanies and grim endurances, heading out from its physical constraints to contemplate a vast panorama, or focusing in on particulars, those embryos of explosive meaning, to evoke the blessed month of Ramadan's intertwining flavors of asceticism and sensual gratitude, its palatable and palpable Light.

—14 RAMADAN, 1416 (FEBRUARY 2, 1996)

THE RAMADAN SONNETS

If Ramadan were a man
I myself would break his knees,
But Ramadan has come from Allah,
you and I accept its sufferings.

— TUNISIAN FOLK POEM
(recorded by Andrés Gide in Amyntas)

1 THE INEVITABLE

It's like practicing for death. No food or drink
during daylight hours no matter
    what, in the
  heat of summer or
      cold of winter,
and no way out of it but through
  sickness, pregnancy, menstruation, madness or travel.
So that

it's something that comes
inevitably each year, like it or not, whether or not
you've got a knack for it, and
    some do, and love to fast, and
      thrive on it, but
  I do not, yet

each year it makes its visit, and year after
  year it builds up to be a
    sweet thing,

which makes it like death, the way it's
always on the
horizon, and an
absolute obligation, which must be

why Muslims often die well. They've had a
lifetime of Ramadans tenderizing them
for The Inevitable. And The

Inevitable surely comes.

1 RAMADAN 1406
MAY 9, 1986

2 THE MELTDOWN OF THE WORLD

The meltdown of the world continues
and its vapors mix above the earth to spell out: *Shame!*

Ferns in rainforests open up their curling fronds
and tiny fan-wing'd creatures on our bathroom wall
sit still in whatever contemplation such gnats contemplate

as a giant rendezvous with destiny
rolls to its conclusive encounter
almost audible in these hills, almost

visible as the famously predicted yellow cloud from the East
that would be one of the
signals of the end of time
    as we know it
        flows along.

And I continue –
as the creature walking across the
bathroom mirror continues –

    fasting.

2 RAMADAN
MAY 10

(*written during the nuclear reactor accident at Chernobyl in the Ukraine*)

3 HEADACHE

Headache, the invalid feeling of being sickly and having to
take it easy, testiness when
things don't go quite
right, annoyance of magnetic
gravity, things
fall in a pile or
slide off an incline – not the

hunger alone that binds us in brotherhood ultimately with
hollow-eyed Ethiopians of
this and all other eras,

but the frailty, the passing alone down the
alien corridors of this world that is such a

poignant reminder to us, so that in our
momentary physiological grayness

when the food finally comes showering at the
end of the fast and turns all things back to
Technicolor again, and we feel
the old soft-shoe lightness in our step again and the
old brightness in our smile,

the cornucopia dome of the sky turned
earthward again, the arid stretch
suddenly fertile, fruits and

flowers as if by
cinematic magic fill our
  perceptions, the
floodgate of generosity opened to the

full, then our

body-bound, sense-imprisoned
selves expand past identity with one
hollow-pitted stomach dusty in the
hot rays of a pitiless sun

to a non-entity whose single characteristic is
gratitude and whose
every pulse is animated by the
Single Provider of all this

and every life's

provision.

2 RAMADAN

4 ADAM'S INDELIBLE IMPRINT

And we're beaten on the ground of our
  own physical being
like someone taking the
  end of a plank and
  beating it on a rock,

we're beaten on the earth by our own
earthiness of being born, we're

beaten against the curved sides of
Father Noah's boat, against the
prison where beautiful
Joseph languished, against the
stake Abraham was tied to, against the
Kabah where the
blackened stone of light is kissed as we
swiftly pass by it to melt
back into the circling herd of
  similar hungry selves, beaten

like old clothes, washed in the
downstream and then
  stamped on by our

own feet which have
  Adam's indelible imprint. The

fast beats us with our own
  selves on the
    hard rock of
      physicality, it

takes us to the edge and makes us
look down,

it takes us to where there is
no escape and closes in, it

is the release of no release on a
day that does
end.

Even an eagle leaps into
no sure space,
hovers on an updraft
searching for food.

Hunger finally
ends. But so does
relief from
hunger.

2 RAMADAN

5 WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN

When the sun goes down
  the flood begins. Lettuce leaves open like orchids
in spotlit clarity,
bread flowers, fruits mature and drop.
Grass green as emerald
  flows with the
    currents of the sea.

This ovoid earth turns through dark and light,
its flesh drowsing or aching awake with the
  cool night or the
    hot day. It fasts and then

feeds on fresh breezes and deep
    tropical currents of the sea.

The garden we planted next to the house with
seedlings already started in little green plastic boxes
is pushing up and out by that
  cunning combination of
sunlight and water that warms and
  soaks the soil seeds live in, in their
slow motion rhythm
  parallel with the
    currents of the sea.

And when we fast during daylight hours, we turn
the whole thing upside-down, so that
day becomes night, but we
  walk through the
    visions of our sleep and
      interact with
  other wide-awake sleepers
    going along their
      rounds in the
  humdrum currents of the social sea.

And when the sun goes down
the earth opens up for us,
day begins, we break our
    fast, and
  enjoy the feast
      most flowingly, the
table is spread, dishes are
piled with glistening dates, water-glasses
beckon refreshingly. The

night is on a slow barge down a
  long river on its
gradual way to join
    the glimmering
      currents of the sea.

3 RAMADAN

6 MOSES AND THE SAINT

A story goes that
Moses, peace be upon him, went
  to find a saint in the desert
    said to be one of the
greatest masters alive.

He went into the arid wastes,
made a camp, went further, made
  another camp, went further perhaps than
anyone dared go, being Moses, and

found, out where the world ends, in a
blazing nothingness of sand and
sky, lying face down with his
chin on the
ground, his saint,
saying with each breath, in a
barely audible voice, only:

Allah – Allah – Allah

The sound of his tongue and the
heartbeat of his body boomed all the

dunes around him to ring in
harmony with that Name.

Moses was struck dumb.

Here, without food, without water,
lay the Master of the Age, dry as
bone, nearly naked, more like
the sand itself than
a man

He sat respectfully, the
saint not seeing him, but keeping his
invocation throbbing on dry lips with
a dry tongue:

Allah – Allah – Allah

At last the saint opened his eyes and saw
Moses, who bowed, and, as good
servant to master, asked if there was
anything the saint needed.

The saint said, in a small voice
Moses had to bend close to hear:

"*Yes. If you could only bring me*
a blanket against the
cold nights, I would be
grateful."

Moses got up
and set out across the
dunes again to his
last camp, grabbed his
blanket and
brought it to the man, who was now

dead.

Shocked, Moses sat in
wonder at the sight. Then he got
up and went
off across the desert to his
camp again to bring a
shovel to bury him.

When he arrived, the body was already
dust.

Only
bones remained.

Amazed, Moses set
off again into the
glare to get a
receptacle for the
bones, to bring them back to
bury them in the town of the
saint's birth.

When he arrived back at the place where
the saint had died, Moses found
only a swirling whirlpool of dust where the
bones had been, and
nothing left but
spiraling drifts of white powder

twisting in the wind.

Moses sat down, his
eyes on the ground.

Then he put his
face on the ground in the
ache and questioning of his
heart, and asked:

O Allah! What is the
meaning of this? Your
saint gone like a
breath in the desert wind?

And God's voice in the
heart of Moses replied:

So long as My friend needed nothing but Me
I gave him all he required.

As soon as he needed something from
other than Me, I

took him.

4 RAMADAN

7 DELIGHT MY DIET

Each year a segment of my time on earth turns dry
and takes me to the far edge of my life.
I turn from food and drink and lust of eye
and making love in daylight with my wife.

Each time it comes the passage becomes clear
that thrusts me forward to that day of death,
but there's a sweetness that's beyond compare
greater than the rankness of my breath.

A something that's like ease, a strength beyond my will
sustains the difficulty, makes the day alright,
creates a lake inside the heart that's still
and casts a golden glow upon the night.

Each year it comes, my dread turns into quiet –
hardship turns to ease, delight my diet.

4 RAMADAN

8 RAMADAN HOUSE GUEST

"Fasting is Mine."
—HADITH QUDSI

Ramadan has come to live with us.
It is God's private apartments
  moved into our house
    and taking over.
Where the doors were
  are now entranceways into His Garden.
Where windows were are
  continuous waterfalls. Abundance in the

dryness. Hidden in the dust:
  clusters of roses. Sprung from our
    footsteps: *ascents.* Climbs past the
usual dimensions: *the usual*
ticking clock in the antechamber. The ancient
mahogany piano has become
  rock crystal, playing only
    God's music on
      silent keys. There is a

haunting rise and fall of
  distant melody come
    close to the inner ear, come
closer even than our
  own physicality, a

sound more essential than the
    marrow of our bones or the
enormous sailing surface of the
  corpuscles of our blood, that is

His interconnecting rooms leading always past the
closed door of His Presence, the

open hallways of approach, the
retreating audience halls where
  attendants move with
    melodious precision, and speak in an
undertone of avalanche, words of
rainforests keeping earth's atmosphere filled with
  breathable air, deeps of the
nearest ocean where various
    killer whales congregate in
      affable groups.

The earth is an outdoor amphitheater of
  affable groups, and time a

  shudder of water across fans of spray at the
  source of the cascade of all
    creaturely manifestation.

When the rooms are filled with the yearly fast
the most geographical distances are drawn near,
Watusi warriors in tiger pelts arrive in silent droves,
desert men in blazing white burnooses slide
down off their donkeys and
come in, Siamese ladies in
straight batik skirts stand in
angular poses to the
click of passing birds, and a

white wind sweeps across everything that
inhales or intakes, exhales or
digests. The very
air becomes a

stomach turned inside-out in which
the sun and all her
planets turn in
wide swinging arcs in the

tonal soup of darkness.

God says, *"Fasting is Mine."*

Because He alone knows its
dimensions. It

contains each ant and
microbe in the

drama of being a creature.

Ramadan has moved
into the earth
like a different sky
settling down on the
same dunes.

For a month the feast takes place in a
heavenly dimension. Trays are

brought in from

other atmospheres.

Our house is His. Its guests
belong to Him. The
repast is His, the

withholding and giving is

He alone.

5 RAMADAN

9 DIE BEFORE YOU DIE

—HADITH OF THE PROPHET

We're never far from the appetites of our body.
Our senses are ready to spring at the slightest touch.
We stand on a bloody field to survey the booty,
but once collected, it soon becomes too much.

We walk inside our flesh-case like a brush
wielded by a painter making rapid splashes,
filling empty scroll-sheets with the blush
of skin-tones come alive in lightning dashes.

Existence comes and goes in furtive flashes.
Nothing belongs to us. It's all on loan.
We are those fleshly bursts like fluttering lashes
that open and close on eyes, and then are gone

If we could see our real deaths we might die.
To die while still alive wakes up the eye.

5 RAMADAN

10 ZAKAT OF THE BODY

Everything has a zakat (tax), and
the zakat of the body is fasting.
—HADITH OF THE PROPHET

So that it is
doing without that is
giving out,
letting go that is
letting something or
someone else grow.
Mountains erode,
seas evaporate, one
creature is food for
another in the
chain of give and
take.

Sky gives
rain to earth and
plants arise. Plants give
oxygen to
air and we
survive.

There's a
principle here
so essential it
can't be named.

Our eating during
nighttime hours is a
replenishing of body for the
daytime of
doing without, and
giving out.

God's tax is
taken for our
creation.

6 RAMADAN

11 INESTIMABLE WATER

What is it that
once each year one fifth of the
earth's population fasts during the
daylight hours?

The globe turning in its usual solitary orbit
basking in the sun on one side, its
backside bathed in darkness, and

one out of five people among its trees and telephone poles
refrains from eating, drinking or lovemaking

from the moment of dawn to the
setting of the sun, marked,

as in Morocco, by the boom of canons.

or the call to prayer and a glass of
water and some dates, or

unknown expectations in deep desert wastes

or tables mounded with piles of sweets, peeled fruit, frothy
juices, nuts, things rolled in
sugar, or

as it was my first Ramadan in
Berkeley, California, just become
Muslim, flew back from two
weeks in Hawaii in
time to start fasting, alone, not quite
sure of the procedure, and I
performed the *Tarawih* prayers standing with a
Qur'an in my hands reading out the
English, and the

rest of the people in the house left me alone,
so used to my good-time living, suddenly
cut off from the fiesta, not
eating or drinking, the
strange one who lives
  up in the attic and
    starves himself for
      Allah–

or Ramadan in Cordoba, in the
nighttime courtyard, sitting on
pillows under Moorish
arches in the whitewashed antique-style
house we all shared, and we'd eat
plates of fresh-baked cookies, and sing the
  songs of our Master, and a

strange ex-convict bad *cante hondo* singer
  jailed in Fascist Spain for political reasons, who
    wasn't a Muslim but who
understood our human position completely, came
every night punctually and
  vigil'd with us, then
after Ramadan disappeared without a
      trace –

or Nigeria in the market, dizzy from
heat and tropical odors so
  pungent of palm oil, sweat and
    papaya, coming home

stunned to our village compound, breaking the
fast with cubes of bright pink
papaya and Nigerian bananas –

or Morocco when our shaykh was alive, and
he at 110 years old kept the fast when it
is no longer compulsory due to old age, and we'd

pass the days passing in gray cobbled streets, and
each person we'd pass was also
fasting, and after being in

England or America where people spend
much of the day happily
stuffing themselves, and to fast is to be

a walking wasteland in the
pure products of America gone crazy,
a monolith of ascetic vigor among
Technicolor consumer goods with doggerel jingles,

to be in a country where everyone is also
fasting is to be in the
weave of a monochromatic
  carpet, part of a
soft design both geometric and
haunting, to pass
people in *djallabas* with dry lips and the
knowledge of total reliance on God, to be among
others also waiting for the
fast to be over, as the Prophet said,
peace be upon him, *"Two things the*
believers long for: the
breaking of the fast and the
  meeting with their Lord,"

and we would go around to a shop in
the evening and get
goat's milk yogurt in little white bowls, and then
after sunrise take the empties back to be
  filled up again for the
next day, and the

mosques with their columned
  esplanades and open-air tiled
    courtyards would be filled with

people reading Qur'an or lying on their sides with their
heads in their hands resting, and the
sound of the fountain was so
totally refreshing, and so
refreshing the afternoon discourse when our

  shaykh would come
  down from his tower-room and
    continue the
Qur'an commentary from the year before, sometimes

talking for over an hour, people
coming from all over, some keeling
over from the light in his words, in the

echoing mosque in his Meknes Zawiyya, the echoing sound of

children playing outside in the alley,
  the distant
banging of thick wooden doors, the
melodious *maghribi* Arabic, ancient honeyed

dryness of the shaykh's voice, sweet
pervasive atmosphere that flowed
out from it, the
detonation going off

years later, when what he

said then came into focus, and still

continues to do so to this day, dipping

deep into the well of Ramadan
to bring up into the light of day

  inestimable water!

7 RAMADAN

12 THE WHOLE EARTH

I hear the breathing of my sleeping boy next door.
The whole earth's filled with life.
My pet bird walks on his cage floor
covered to black out light

Out on the streets, the roar of night,
cars pass, people shout, silence.
The whole earth turns until it comes right
or we face death, defenseless.

Days go on, way past sense,
coupled together like breath is.
In and out, both sides of the fence,
as absolute as death is.

Life and death do a dance alone.
Alive we eat. When dead: *bone*.

7 RAMADAN

13 WHALES

In Orange County they're excavating the remains of a
6 million year old baleen whale,
and nearby, a smaller one that
may be its baby, on a
construction site that
was to be the building of
ocean front homes.

For six million years those
bones have lain deep in the loam, the
curved ribs and
inner ear-bones, the
baleen itself that
once sieved krill when the

leviathans pushed, open-mouthed, through the
same waters six million years ago that
somehow circulate in our
oceanic atmosphere now.

See the wise whale eye casting
protective glances on her calf!
It paddles gracefully but

innocently through million year old
  waters unaware of
    long-toothed, beady-eyed predators

of uncertain description, with
horns on their noses or
  strange knobs on their
    foreheads, *who knows?*

Sunlight dim on the
  watery world,
moonlight shining down on our
  living tonnage now just

a sideshow of spiritless
  bones exposed in the

bulldozed dirt in
  Orange County this
    Ramadan, 1406,
  six
  million
    lunar years
      later.

8 RAMADAN

14 DRUNKENNESS OF THE WORD

Drunkenness of the Word, you ignite the nations
as nothing else can, a flame of
sculpted stars carried from
arena to arena, whisper

made by a solitary singer in a vacant lot in the
spotlight of the full moon in his

uprise, rung by rung, from trashy mortality,
head dazed by successive different colors of halo
to the most celestial dimensions until.

eyes just at the level of vaporizing clouds,
he catches sight of his goal and is
transformed into a fixed aerial body

that comes back singing, and walks through the
marketplace buying a pound of figs, a dried fish,
a trowelful of almonds, bunches of bananas and
a pot-scraper made of wood-shavings
somehow held together.

In the most windless place, in the shadow of the
  dunes of doom,
O Word made alive by our
  pronunciation of you
    unawares, you flower all of a sudden into

forests inhabited by prismatic birds whose
flight breaks light into the
  primary colors and
    spreads their sheen on the
      broad leaves of our
    private pleas!

Word of Love, cry out of desperation,
  word half-spoken, the other half
    caught in the heart,
word like a groundhog checking the
  length of its shadow before fully
    emerging, song,
solitude's antique chorus
that, each time the lips form it,
is polished anew and
  emerges bronze and perfectly ticking
    with open face and

solid footing.

We are reversed in our lives
until the Word speaks us
and faces us forward
into the spray of the cascade of its
  meaning always coming toward us

from above sea-level where the Source of all
words and The Word itself

high atop a tower of Light
sends it down fully
propelled for the
  journey.

8 RAMADAN

15 EVEN ASLEEP, THE WORD IS AUDIBLE

Even asleep, the Word is audible.
Even in death, the Word is there.
We hear in our dreams the foul or laudable.
In death the meanings are visibly bare.

A single word in the dark strikes a flare
to light the crags and dangerous yawns
as we push ahead with our search affair
as if for a sliver on rolling lawns.

The Word is sudden as the stillness of fawns
caught in headlights feeding on flowers –
silence its soul-mate, invisible its form,
timeless its heart in the passing of hours.

It's the Word of Love that takes us beyond
the boundaries negative words have formed.

8 RAMADAN

16 JEALOUS LOVER

The fast is also like
  being so wracked with love
    you can't eat. Tossed and
  wrenched and high and dry with
single-minded devotion and expectation that no single

bite or sip can pass our lips, our
eyes are parched, throat dry,
head gone elsewhere almost entirely, and

only with extreme concentration can we
perform our usual tasks with anything
like normality.

It sweeps us off our feet. It's
bigger than we are. It goes
  off with all our thoughts.

It's a jealous lover.

10 RAMADAN (morning)

17 IT WON'T TURN AND LOOK AT US

It won't turn and look at us, it
looks out to sea with
  gray eyes, it becomes the back of a

figure standing in a landscape, never
speaks, never motions with its
hands for us to come nearer, it

stands its self-sufficient solitary watch
while the tide sizzles, it lets its

strange hair blow in the wind but
never shows its face. Meanwhile we

fail to eat, eating our
heart out with the weight of unrequited

passion that sits in us like
lead and makes
all our movements
static.

It could go on without us, it could
walk off in the glare along the shore
and finally blend into the water of the sea
and never cast a glance in our
direction before departing, it's our

own predicament, we're hopelessly

tangled in love, except that in

Ramadan we're actually fired with
hope that we please God by the

purity of our fasting, and pinpoint our
thoughts away from material
taint if we can, and if we can

fasten our hearts only on Him, and at the
very least let eating and
drinking go for His sake, and it is like

a love affair so intense we
forget ourselves almost completely except for a
general discomfort, so that really what the
revelation of Islam is all about is the

physics of a love-affair of the
intensest kind outwardly which if we
fulfill as completely as possible we might taste the

almost unbearable sweetness
inwardly as well and so be

thoroughly consumed.

10 RAMADAN (morning)

18 DEAD ALIVE

Dead, we arrive at the banquet and
start eating.
We have lain so long in our
oblong narrowness waiting for the
earth to open and we to rise with
physical vigor and

the table is spread with a sparkling white
tablecloth that smells of fresh laundry and
roses, and there is a

purity in the air that had grown
dank down below during
usual daylight, so that to

live on this earth in usual daylight
while all space surrounds us

is to be asleep to our real dimension

which is more evident when, after
enduring a day of fasting, at the

point of earthly sunset, we

arrive alive at the
banquet table ready to
    eat.

10 RAMADAN (midday)

19 HALF-DAY'S DELIGHT

My son at nine who fasts half-days says
I should say how
everything tastes *special*
when we break the fast.

"What a good idea!" I say. So here it is,
on his young recommendation, first
taste of fasting in his
seasonal lifetime, already
seeing so much in the finest
detail, knowing it all
comes from God –

the tang of apple or melted cheese in a tortilla
a special delight after
not eating even only

half a day!

10 RAMADAN (evening)

20 GASTRONOMICAL RIGMAROLE

Fresh crisp cantaloupe spooned from its skin,
tamari-soaked almonds and *mahjoul* dates,
hot Ceylon tea with honey mixed in,
golden delicious apples on plates,

mango, stringy, sweet fit for potentates,
tropical specialty served on our table,
strawberries, nestled each with their mates
red as sunsets, delicious as fable –

tastes more pungent than words are able
to say without calling up alien likenesses,
each one basically untranslatable
into anything but their own sweet essences.

Hagan Däz coffee ice cream in a bowl –
I could go on and on with this
gastronomical rigmarole!

10 RAMADAN (evening)

21 OUR HAPPILY POWERLESS CORE

In a disordered imagination lies the source of human unhappiness. It makes us wander across the seas from one fantasy to another, and if its spell leaves us in the end, it is by then too late: the hour strikes and the man dies, detesting life.

—NAPOLEON

The terrible struggles, gun-boat gray, gray fog and
mist against chalk cliffs at Dover,

historical rampages, swarm of weird Mongols
who seemed to take such rare pleasure in destruction,

endless forced marches, the French into Moscow
in winter led by such a diminutive Napoleon,

the comebacks of fraudulent despots, their
gargantuan struggles to win a few

years or months, or just a
few days of power,

the power-mad lusting for supreme
command
  authority over life and
    death to their
  own satisfaction, the

wobbly Fun House mirror that
portrays them gigantic, heads as

  big as the globe, bodies
  limp macaroni –

the earth's surface
  rutted with these
    hobnail boot tyrants that are our

own selves seeking unfair advantage
over the light of our already

happily powerless core.

10 RAMADAN (night)

22 AN EXPLANATION OF THE REASON FOR THE FAST

God created the intellect.
He asked it to go up. *It went up.*
He asked it to go down. *It went down.*
He asked it to go away. *It went away.*
He asked it to come near. *It came near.*

Then God created the self.
He asked it to go up. *It refused.*
He asked it to go down. *It refused.*
He asked it to go away. *It refused.*
He asked it to come near. *It refused.*

So God sent the self to the Fire for 10,000 years.
He brought it before Him.
He asked it to go up. *It refused.*
He asked it to go down. *It refused.*
He asked it to go away. *It refused.*
He asked it to come near. *It refused.*

God sent the self to the Fire for another 10,000 years.
He brought it before Him.
He asked it to go up. But it had become even more proud and rebellious. *It refused.*
He asked it to go down. *It refused.*
He asked it to go away. *It refused.*
He asked it to come near. *It refused.*

Finally God deprived the self of food and drink for 10,000 years.
After 10,000 years with no food or drink
God brought the self before Him.
The self was weak from hunger.
He asked it to go up. It trembled and wavered.
It went up.
He asked it to go down. It trembled and wavered.
It went down.
He asked it to go away.
It went away.
He asked it to draw near.
It drew near.

In this way the self was broken
and became the sweet slave of Allah.

10 RAMADAN (night)

23 NEW FAWN

The greatest enemy is the one between our two sides.
— HADITH OF THE PROPHET

Who is this
  pert and handsome
rogue with the rose in his
    teeth, the
glamorous cotillion belle decked out in
      flounces, who are these
grinning, near-famous, utterly charming

renegades who refuse to take the whole
journey towards the light? What is their

resistance, why do they paint such a
wooden sneer on otherwise so
  pliable faces?

Why, in the valley of
  new-blown wildflowers are there
    such hard rocks glaring
      balefully at the
sky?

Unreasonable, no amount of
buttery rhetoric will
  convince them out of the
self-proclaimed
  glory of their position, the
pawn-broker of the heart, dealing in
raw diamonds every day on his green velvet mat, but
not letting the light from their
  multiple facets enter him,

thick tree who
lifts itself up in the
flexible forest but won't bow
  down except by
forked lightning.

Who is this
cast of thousands really resolved into

  one crusty
  sentinel of the

glassed-over territory, frozen solid inside,
  of resistance to

the fluid, always trans-
forming autumnal

landscape with
silver and turquoise
rivers running through it, where a

new fawn stands
still on the rim
it seems forever

and then drinks?

12 RAMADAN (morning)

24 TERRITORY OF ANCESTORS

As the fast moves forward
  our lives fly backward
into the territory of ancestors
knee-deep in swamp grass
    gazing at game too
  fierce for one man to
      catch.

Their unanimous eyes know the
  moment to collectively strike.
They shift their weight, they
  tighten their grips on their weapons, they
    wait for their throats to tighten, for
a single heartbeat from all of them at once
to burst like a light above the lake into which they
fling their bodies as one around the
  browsing beast and
    pull it down.

Later, firelight shines on their satisfied faces.
They are satisfied. The beast in its
roasted death is being
  slowly transformed into
    unwritten history, and they are

satisfied with The One Who put the beast
there, and spoke to it through
  angels or shadows to be
    still and let them
conquer its wooliness and
  give up its
    flesh to their
      hunger.

They see past the curvature of the world.
They see out past comet-spray. They see
  faces in stars, and
    lively configurations, they

see the geometry of dreams and plot their own
souls in radiant circles as they
  descend into the dark, or
    rise up from
  tides of earth, like an
    unhealed wound
      just opening.

As the fast moves forward
our lives run backwards
past moments linked by this
  consciousness we have from the first

ping of our creation,

and the breath-trail we have
left behind, and
interlinked thought-tracks with their
inevitable consequences moving out like

shapes of light from
shapeless shadows, into

manifestation, and I see how

born on this earth I was meant to finally arrive at the
frontiers of a fast so
ancient it is
human ancestry itself, it is the
map of human misery and
the joy of sheer existence, my own

frail hungers and denials, withdrawals from the touch of the
absolutely
inscribed bounty of God in the slightest

flake or grape that pops into
view from its long-time process to
now

The delicious morsel and I
meet
at the destined moment.

Nothing's lacking but the
pinch of salt
that tells all.

The future
festivities
of the tribe.

Desolate starvation,
nuclear extermination

or
delight.

12 RAMADAN (night)

25 WE STAND ON EARTH

We stand on earth like dazzled scarecrows.
The sky's black birds all flash away.
We walk like doom through blasted corn-rows
regretting we failed to see the day

when mother-planet would lie back gray,
depleted of her nourishing sweets.
The free-reined mind of man can't play
with power the way kids play in streets.

The warning-sign of truth repeats
itself until we see or not.
Vision shows us and completes
our deepest intuitions thought.

Nuclear activity, domain of subtle powers we
can't contain in form, but give up to Divinity.

12 RAMADAN (night)

26 RAMADAN ANGELS

Ramadan angels crisscross the sky
  just above the earth on
    watch for fasters who
lift up into other dimensions due to their
      turning away from
  created things to their Creator.

They are anonymous beings of light like
  so many radiant molecules
doing their job in a well-oiled body
  acting at ease. But their
    body is the world, their

skin domains of transverse
  communication, inside and out,
distant and near, and they are the

blue angels of Arthur Rimbaud, heraldic angels with
  black wings of César Vallejo,
    angelic aurora borealis sprites of
Shelley shinnying up the
    purple shafts of night, and they are

supernatural warriors of India on plains of fiery clouds
riding fanatic horses steaming wide
billows of green, and they are

recorders of breaths,
measurers of dewdrops,
conductors of vitality to
grass blades and beard-hair, they

congregate in geometric fluidity as
vast as rock-crystals, as
tightly packed as

air swiveling around inside air
like those Chinese ivory balls carved
almost infinitely
one inside the other, or

one sphere outside the other, each

dimensional area totally
inhabited by The
Angelic!

No drop of water falls from
  faucet or
    sweating brow, no
corpuscle of blood
    circulates that is not

propelled and taken through its
paces by intentional consciousnesses

  sent on their errands by
    God!

And in Ramadan demons are chained up,
the Gates of The Garden are flung wide, and

angels scour territories of The Alive for

perfection in a dry throat, perfection in a
tight stomach, perfection in a

heart made lighter by the strong
recollection of its Source!

13 RAMADAN

2 – ANGELS, FURTIVE AND UNSEEN

Angels, furtive and unseen
pass quite easily through matter.
They move like a cascade's glittering sheen
from peak-top crashing with a clatter

as rapidly and deft as water.
Made of light, they move as light
that has no substance to get fatter,
but only, against the dark, more bright.

Angelic bands move through the night.
There's no cliff, gulf or canyon too
outrageous for their leaping flight
to cross, or swim, or scatter through.

They're what makes everything alive.
Dead worlds vibrate when they arrive.

13 RAMADAN

28 WE SING IN A DECADENT LAND

We sing in a decadent land,
like the pane of a framed glass window
    going up the sky at an angle
through which you can see
yellow rolling hills and blowing willow-trees

while black smoke billows below.
Like a rose-quartz crystal born in the
  grease left on a plate in an all-night
    restaurant off Highway 101,
like the face of an Art Nouveau beauty suddenly
  appearing on a bulging
    overworked Third World
drudge in a cheap late-night launderette,

it is late, it is
all night, it is
twenty-four hours of
the dissolution of the human spirit, the
lowest common denominator of degradation
  the norm,

skeletons come out of their
closets in three piece suits and
expensive shoes, their
bony grins still skeletal in the
frozen light,

and like an exquisite operatic song heard coming from an
Italian tenement window, lilting out over
what were once wheat fields
now filled with
rusted iron machinery and
wrenched rubber tires,

we sing – the voice
rises up delicate
steps – we are the

madman going up those steps to serve the
Single Owner of the Universe with what

little we own of our own, on a
tray made out of our

own most unhesitant breaths, our own
unstitched heartbeats,

and not knowing the
    outcome of our meeting
once we're alone,

but full of

constant astonishment

we sing.

14 RAMADAN (night)

29 A SONG GOES OUT ABOVE THE JUNK

A song goes out above the junk,
one that's not been heard before,
uncurls like an elegant elephant's trunk
and opens up a distant door.

Once open, it begins to soar
and lifts up trees in its embrace.
The whole becomes a deep-sea floor
that floats out into outer space.

Its words are earth and every race
and every heart that ever beat.
The meaning is to see His Face
and then to sing it on the street –

to walk with Light and words of song
among the earthbound human throng.

15 RAMADAN (morning)

30 TASTE BUDS

Arab coffee poured from an American
plastic decanter, pale, made from what is known as
"blond coffee beans" from being
only partially roasted, prepared with
cardamom seeds you can
tell as much by
some subtle cardamom vibration as by
smell,
pungent even in a Styrofoam cup. Then

Malaysian chicken *biryani*, a sauce made from
spices and greens, tiny pointed chili-peppers
that in one bite open your nasal passages and
put zigzag light along the sides of your head.

Libyan couscous, very red, unlike white
goat-buttery Moroccan style, with
tender spareribs whose
meat is as sweet as
cheese. Then

sesame halva, memory-triggers for
Middle-Easterners because they
grew up on chunks of it in pita bread for
breakfast, as we did on the
Pilgrimage in Mecca, and it was there I

first heard of it as a
staple breakfast diet with
cups of milky coffee to start the

day.

This is the
taste buds remembering God's
Divine Names in their

own way.

15 RAMADAN (night)

31 THINGS IN CASSEROLES

Things in casseroles laid out on newspaper,
bowls with tinfoil uncovered and displayed.
Knee to knee, conversation begins to taper
off as we let the hungry body wade

stomach deep in a bountiful sun-filled glade
of foods prepared by balancing hands,
hearts that are careful of how it is made
because the fasting consciousness understands

what it's like not to eat, then return from lands
of famine for a day and have some relief.
Like a tree that during a cold snap stands,
then with first warmth puts out first one leaf

then another, until the whole tree is quivering full.
Decrease and increase, in this world, rule.

15 RAMADAN

32 VOCALIZATION

During the dawn prayer, reciting
  Qur'an out loud, I saw

how suited the mouth and voice are
  for sounding the sacred syllables,

wetness of throat and tongue, tongue
  hitting teeth,
    curling and rolling of
      tongue, shape of cheeks, touch of
  lips – then how the

resonance from the heart, like the
  core of an up-thrusting geyser, and

the darker recesses of the body-chambers, how they
  shape the sounds that are made, and how then
around the sounds the body is shaped like a
reverberant protoplasm, tending to
    refinement when the
      words are refined. How

perfectly suited to sound the Qur'an the total human
  organ is, the perfect
    alive membrane, and how,

at lesser degree, sweetly enjoyable it is for the
physical mouth to say beautiful poetry, and how

resounding it is to speak true, well-shot words,
how true speech is salutary to the
whole body, and at

lesser and lesser levels common speech, then
degrading speech, then
foul talk and nonsense, how

destructive to the
body they are, until the

grossness of the physical is at its
thickest and most
pig-like at the
lowest level of
talk, and how the

face and eyes and
posture of the speaker

reflect what he or she
says.

16 RAMADAN (morning)

33 BREAKING THE FAST

Breaking the fast at sunset –

the *aftertaste* of

a day of no food!

17 RAMADAN

(*Day of the Battle of Badr*)

34 THE DAYS SCATTER

I

The days scatter in
  all directions,
time is
    disjunct, it
      stutters along in our
    memory although its
current is constant and
  straight, years

somehow link with each
  other even if not in the
    same order as
      lived,
whole chunks of the
  past appear
    before us, the
future sometimes
    bobs up somewhere
      behind us,

but the Fast is out of all
  this, the
period of Ramadan is its
own world, it is the

antidote to this one.

a kind of Black Hole in which all the
  matter of this world seems to
    dissolve,

it is a compressed speck, it is a
dot of time in which the whole Qur'an at once
was revealed to
  Muhammad, peace be upon him, making him
overnight into the
  truthful Prophet of

    God!

2

And it comes each
  year on time, it is its
    own time, and this

earthly window opens into it each
  year and
  engages us in its
shortened breath, in its
acrid breath of a
  person fasting, in its

tightened temples of a
  body in need of
    moisture, in its
faltering steps of someone in
      need of food,

so simple is it, this
need, so
  totally
    essential to our
being, and, as in the

Night of Power
in the cave whose
interior light expanded past
all known frontiers of
  molecular
    reality, such

a band of essential light is it, that it
cuts through everything

clean

and leaves us

transformed!

18 RAMADAN

35 MIRROR

Stern face in the old mirror
as I pass by.
As time goes do I get clearer?
I catch my eye.
Seeing the self I call "*my*,"
who is that one?
Stranger, friend, face so wry,
father? Son?

Light with flesh around it, planet, sun,
orbiting sphere?
Who gives the orders: "*Walk! Run!*"
Anyone here?

Always a stranger in this world.
Strange shape in the mirror, face
unfurled!

18 RAMADAN (night)

36 MADAME TUSSAUD'S AND THE SUBTERFUGES OF THE SELF

I wonder if we ever know our self
  or only its
    subterfuges laid as
safeguards against recognizing the self's basic
      non-existence
  before the
    independent Existence of
      God?

The 3-D Technicolor one we catch glimpses of in the
passing Fun House mirrors of
  other peoples' selves, is it a

crust blown down an empty street by dry wind
into a vacant lot of
    strong gray sunlight?

Is it a wax figure of
  definite outline and
    exaggerated personality suddenly
  come to life on the
    top floor of the
      wax museum at
  Madame Tussaud's where I

worked in London for a few weeks as a
guard in brown uniform, standing alive among
wax figures of De Gaulle, Churchill at his
  Sunday painter's easel, and the

whole royal family standing on a grand
stage before which one day a woman stood for a long time
scrutinizing them all very carefully, then
stomped away shouting to me, in the
  empty exhibition hall,
"They don't look like that at all!
I should know, I was their nanny for fifteen years!
They don't look anything like that, not at all!"

And do we
look anything like our molded replicas of ourselves, do we
  stand still under
  scrutiny by the one most
familiar with our ways, our own
    selves, or do we
      melt down to waxen
unconscious components at last, do the

tightly organized responses and idiosyncrasies of
    each individual

one of us finally blend into
basic building materials in their
malleable inert form and are we then

forced to face the fact of Who is The One
  Who is Alive
in all this, *Allah, The One!*

  Who is in all this

  Alive!

19 RAMADAN (morning)

37 TOWN

for Abdallateef Whiteman, village architect

An adobe wall, dust by dust, is built up
to surround the town.
A trail enters it from
  desolate and wild surroundings.
A cut-off from the unpredictable and
  unkempt in nature is made, a
    boundary.

The town is constructed, brick by humanly
  molded, hand-packed mud brick,
making house-walls, rooms, wooden window frames,
  doors, then roof-beams, tiles to
    catch and let rain
      run off to the
newly formed cobbled streets. Then

lights go on in the houses. Passing from
room to room. At the
domestic centers: *multiple radiance.*

Winding lanes lead in jagged labyrinthine ways
to the center, past

bow-legged pillars of the
    marketplace, selling-stalls under
provisional roofs,
  concatenation of courtyards, rushing

to the central square, where an even
stronger light is displayed. And when

we arrive
there is nothing. At the

heart of the town is an
openness, so
tasty and
sensual as to be almost a

thing. Bright air. Intangible, unnamable, but a

definite apprehension. And there is
light there.

Such is the
self. Such is the

Fast.

19 RAMADAN (night)

38 APPREHENSION

The city sounds, pipes twang, motors
roar by, clocks tick,

sick babies cry. Many layered
symphony orchestrated

elsewhere, played out
here. But in the

irony of opposites, elsewhere is here, it is
here that is elsewhere. So it is

by the tight scrutiny of the indefinable Way
here that it is orchestrated. *There* where it is

played out. And it is even both
orchestrated and played out here as well.

All far dimensions fit into one
passing sphere.

Here.

20 RAMADAN (night)

39 THE HUMAN TRIBE

The savage comes back from the forest
  with porcupine-on-a-stick.
The deep sea diver emerges with a basket of stingrays.
Explorers, after many years lost in the bush
return with an accurate map
  and exotic diseases.
The astronaut lands on earth having been a few inches
  taller than usual
with a new equilibrium and visions none but the
  saints have ever seen with physical eyes
  of lunar dunes and the
    infinite cold blackness of deep space.

Miners rise from shafts that go straight down
where rare gases sigh up from earth's
  molten core.
People emerge out of invisible dimensions
  mixing in with the populace unawares
    and sitting beside them in
      all-night cafeterias on the
    Lower East Side, nibbling on
      berry pie with a
    glass of
    glowing green milk.

Totally unusual folk circle the skies above Kansas
sighted only by farmers knowledgeable of the night skies
and so poignantly aware of any dots of light
    out of the ordinary passing between
  Orion and Betelgeuse.

From the top of the planet come
flat-faced folk wearing slit-bone sunglasses
  and halos of fur, and who know
    more about the Unseen than a
nuclear physicist.

From the bottom of the planet come
quiet, naked, long-legged, aboriginal charters of dream
  who can find water holes buried by
    generations before them
    through an unknown sense
      totally atrophied in a
successful corporate president.

So many diverse threads bind the
  human tribe together, explorers and
    trail-blazers, and the
simple, anonymous natural giants of
spectacular wisdoms unguessed at
    by Ph.D.'s,

keeping the planet-lanes open for as
long as possible.

until last rains fall
on silvery grasslands

we will all lie buried in at last
waiting for the conch-shell spiraling

Israfilian horn

to blow us back
home.

21 RAMADAN (morning)

** Israfil is the angel "whose blast from the 'horn' of primordial sound will shatter forms and creation at the end of time."*
–Glassé,
THE CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF ISLAM

40 A CRY GOES OUT

A cry goes out above the earth,
the link in the tribe is strong.
Each of us part of one family at birth
as if we were tied by thong.

It's totally impossible and totally wrong
to deny, when we look in another's face,
no matter how short or long
the nose, or eye, or what one says

to another in a speech that fills up space
with direct heart's voice, word for word –
the planetary orchestra of the race,
each syllable a note that is heard

deep in the heart's profoundest ear,
making our mortal unity perfectly clear.

21 RAMADAN (evening)

41 IF THE OCEAN WITH ITS WHALES

If the ocean with its whales is just a
  teardrop in the wali's eye,
if a burning trail is just a nerve-twitch
    on the sole of his right foot,
if night and its terrors, tigers entering tents,
  riots in refugee camps, nuclear invasions,
    are just indigestion affecting the brain
      and keeping the
  sleepless wali awake, if the

whole earth with its jewel-like surfaces
is just a point of light that
disappears in the wali's
  slit-eyed contemplation, and all the

ribbons of stars feed through him like the
  typewriter ribbons of a
novel of empty pages

in which his breaths are chapters, his
  heartbeats the uncoiling
    dramas of man and woman,
      tyrant and slave, uprise and
downfall again and again at the feet of a

yawning lion sitting at a blue desert's edge,
who, after yawning, turns quietly back into stone –

if all this we get so excited about
is only a blip on the seismograph of the
wali's imperturbable heart, then

when doors bang open on the lunar landscape of all
future possibility, when
air is a crowded closet of dank green fumes,
when water turns to glass and
glass turns to opaque granite,

when we tune in to the thought-trains of the
most lugubrious worm deep down in the
gluiest loam, then

we might get up, hands pushing
against the curvature of the earth, to a
standing position, then a
walking one, and into the

vertical sea of light that
presses against our foreheads and chests, walk

far into the day that awaits us there
which has no border, goes way
past golden palm tree oases, and

on into spectacular grayness

where all thirst is slaked
and all hungers

know their names.

22 RAMADAN (early morning)

42 HIS AUDIBLE SILENCE

God from First to Last is always the same.
Volcanoes erupt, tidal waves flash, cities disappear.
Each thing that happens is an appearance of His Name
rotating into action in this visible sphere.

This room in its post-dawn quiet surrounding here,
of the day's majestic light that spreads its glow
on common things that bob up to the surface to appear
then fade away like patches of late snow,

my piles of books, our life with its undertow
of time that drags it back while surging on ahead,
does not in any way affect, with all its crashing flow,
God, Who's Lord of all the living and the dead.

No thing that's added adds to Him a thing.
He in His audible silence makes all life sing.

22 RAMADAN (after dawn)

43 RASPBERRY JULEPS

Raspberry juleps sweet as cucumbers.
delicate froth on the rim of a glass.
even the hasty buffalo lumbers
slowly when entering Paradise Pass.

Tweets in triplets cascade in a mass
from eaves where they sit by the mossy trail
that suddenly cuts right down through the grass
I imagine appearing in this concrete vale

of tears of the modern city, moan and wail
of silent citizens taking their walks.
Silver in lightning rays, sparkles like chain-mail
flash through the nonsense everyone talks.

Why not see canyons filling with light?
Any moment leads to *some* insight!

22 RAMADAN (*afternoon – in the public library*)

44 HIS GENEROUS PLEASURE

Your roiled eyes, your
  hips, our hot bodies'
    struggle, the music of
long chords threading beyond us out to
  desolate pastures where
    African animals all stand still at
      once looking in our
direction, through

grasses no foot has tread on, no
alligator has slid through yet on his way to his
  murky bath. We

roll in bed after a
full day of abstinence, and the
full gyro of a power beyond us rolls
  through us, there is a

wave so deep it can
  only be touched by the
    physical bodies'
      release, there's a

call so clear a
spirit stands up from the
  heat of animal delight and

  steps out
    across
  white
    waters.

Passion is a gift
we return to the Giver
in full enjoyment
of His generous
  pleasure.

22 RAMADAN (night)

45 SINGLE PETAL

12:30, after lovemaking, up soon for breakfast,
her hand on my back as she sleeps.
There's a velvet light in the room at rest
while the ocean of street-traffic sloshes through
    post-midnight deeps.

A quiet at the center. Something had for keeps
in the memory's core. A shared release.
Lovemaking brings refreshment in clean sweeps
through the cobwebby body aching for peace.

Nothing alive should be allowed to freeze.
No thought or thing should congeal to
    blank-faced metal.
A current of oil and water rippled by a breeze
filters down through this pool with its single petal

of outrageous delicate light
drifting slowly down

to cover it with a night
that is burnished brown.

23 RAMADAN (morning)

46 LOVE

Love is a nectar pressed from a
  silvery grape
    plucked from the Unseen
just hanging ever so slightly
    over the Garden wall into

  this world. The vine has
many delicious souls incorporated into its
  maze. The arbor is the place for
    bells. Each touch of wisdom's
wind matures the grapes, and their
fermentation is love.

We cannot talk about love in the street-digger's ditch.
We can't talk about it
  hip-deep in mud, with the
    stink of the
world on our clothes.
Then it is only the loud
  laughter of
    quick relief, not the

arduous journey.

We have to talk about love in the
place where the
  pure drunks congregate who know the
    bell-clear Name of the
      Beloved, and are
  not afraid. It is a
place of proclamations, and
lack of all restraint. It is a
place where the next world's boughs hang
  close to the earth within
    easy reach.

Slender herons fly across the silhouette of love's foliage
  at angles in a white sky.
Love is a scent that has
the gaunt-eyed standing at
  newly opened doors
    begging for
      audience.
Love weaves hair into Renaissance knots
  with tiny neon flowers
only the wisest bees
  discover to sip its nectar.
Love is a terrible wave only the
  most intrepid navigator
dares enter. Let us not

talk about love. It
cannot be mentioned in the
  marketplace. In the
boardrooms of America
  love has gone astray, and the
    object misplaced.
Love is a harsh master
jealous of duplicity. Love is a

lone eagle proud on a harsh rock.

Love is a faint glow in the distance on the
  high seas, but
    enough for the
  lone survivor. It is the

pocket of calm between two
rough sheets of sandstorm.

It is the
sandstorm itself.

It is a taste that will test the taster
who gives up all doubts and takes a
  leap that leaves a chasm
    forever between what he

once was and what he has
  now become. Time turns the
gulf into a canyon so wide
    there is
    no turning back. Love is a

mysterious guide on a mist-filled mountain path
that winds around severe peaks, and
  passes caves cut into the
liquid rock-crystal of dream. But it

goes past them.

There is no animal capable, in all its
  animal innocence, of
    embodying the
full dimension of love. Love is not for
the lower beasts, even though their
  loyalty partakes of a
      portion of its sea.

No space of creation is without it. Even in the
darkest depths of the sea.

It drives us on.

It takes hold.

It brings some into the
land of a foolishness so
  wise only
few understand its
    language. Birds
understand it. They stitch the

daylight skies with its
syllables.

The brilliant
  light of silence
knows it.

The hopeless lover with

moist eyes

knows it.

23 RAMADAN (morning)

47 AT CLIFF-HEIGHT

At cliff-height the
  lover loses all fear of
altitude. Knows only
pursuit. Goes forward,
and death appears in the

mesquite clutching the
  bottom of rock. Like an
exquisitely beautiful
    silken flame
death appears to the
bewildered lover, but no
porcelain mask of seductive smiles

diverts her heart, her eyes see
  fuzzy worlds around her, her
    focus is on the
central pupil of
  erupting light, she

lets death wash peripherally over her, not the
discarded physical object of death, but the
shimmering corridor of it
  she goes down on her

one-pointed trail of
desire for
total
abandonment in the

Beloved's embrace.

This is not the place for common speech.
This is not a realm of speculation. No one can

proclaim what he has not known. But the

trail is marked. The
air is filled with a
new scent. The

sound of near fountains

laps soothingly in

lusciously

sibilant

tones

23 RAMADAN

48 TOTALLY EXHAUSTED

Totally exhausted, I fell
  back on the pillows and imagined
rain on the roof in a
  night of mist.
In a split second of surrender to the
    body's tyranny
I heard the soft patter of drops on
  tar paper.
The insistent soothing
dot-pattern of Mercy directly
    showering down
      above me.

And it floated me for a
  moment in a
    sense of rest.
I floated out in a
  moment so short as to be
    unnoticeable
across a peaceable sea where only the
softest glow of sea-dwellers wavered
rather than the
    more ferocious thrashing of
      ocean deeps, those

jaws with their
infinite rows of
close-set teeth!

For that tiniest moment
I rested, limbs lax, flesh
slack, mind

afloat, heart a

sound of

waves in the

inner ear.

24 Ramadan

49 THEIR COOL EMBRACE

So much time – fifteen years of
  Ramadans, one Hajj, five prayers a day –
are just a beginning, and at the
  end perhaps we will be just a
    little venerable, a little
      wise, propped up on

pillows in a
  shadowed room, letting the
    phrases of the
Qur'an lead us.

Each moment is a revelation of the
direct influence of God on
  His Creation.
In the morning
  clover leaves bend down
    under the
    weight of His
      delicate dew.
Wart hog babies
  stick close to their
wart hog mothers in
    dusty plains.

The blank terrain of Unknowing
opens suddenly in a
  glassy blaze.

We find ourselves where we
never were before, holding on to

what little we know.

If it is hanging over a
  precipice with large
    rats gnawing the roots we
clutch, or if it is
standing or sitting still in the
glow of a wall at sunset seeing tomorrow's

edge showing just slightly above our
lower eyelids,

then all these seconds, like tiny faceted
  pebbles, count toward the
larger highway, the big
one-way street, leading to its
    cinematic
      spectacular dead end

that shoots up at the
dramatic showdown into

  hidden pools in the
  underside of a
    constantly moving
      heaven.

And all these
steps taken, all these
  prescriptions ingested, made
    ours, embraced with
      trust in their
outcome, this
waiting actively while
  acting already dead, going to a

goal we know is
  already behind us,

offering the
  tiny tray of our
    bones as if they were
precious antiquities secured in a
  marketplace where such
    plentiful commodities are still

sold at a premium. Such offerings

pale against the exquisite
hothouse orchids of the
natural saints. They are our starting

gunshots every second of the
  race, they who have

  lead us in
  heartbeats vocalizing the
    Name of God for each
downbeat and
  upbeat, so that

for them seconds are
eternities, minutes lengthen to
years on either side, past any
  limits the pure mind might
    impose, to a

wingspread of angels no horizon can contain, but

in our rush toward splendor

the heat of our humanity is

taken up in their

cool embrace.

24 RAMADAN

50 AFTER AFTERNOON NAP

I

Awakening from finally a Sunday afternoon nap
having a hard time actually getting up, from
  weakness? From being an
    empty lead weight? From mental
inertia at not being able to go
right into the kitchen and grab a cookie, or have the
institutional cup of tea set out in one of the
china cups with blue flower rims, honey and milk on a
round silver tray, the Sunday afternoon
pick-me-up (the actually
  everyday afternoon pick-me-up) totally

gone out the window during this whole month of
cutting the food umbilical, weaning from
Earth as Mother, Life as Tit, for just one

month out of the year, every year of our
life, until we get
good at it? Or
  die?

One month being castaway on a
desert island from dawn to sunset
with no refrigerator?

A band of deprivation running through our year!
And that band has
  entranceways to the Garden, actual
    Gates open in the
      Unseen for us for all the

fasting we have done, cheerfully or
grumpily, but
submissively, a Gate that
  engulfs us during our

doing without, so that its

sparkling energy of openness

actually surrounds us in the

air as we

forgo the pounding

demands of our stomachs and

titillating appetites on the

lunch counter of day, like a

drunk's fist insistent on the

greasy Formica of some

downtown Sloppy Joe's.

2

The beginning of the Fast is a mercy.
The middle a forgiveness of sins.
The end, freedom from the Fire.

No one said it was supposed to be easy.
No one said it had to be
  enjoyable. (*I'm from California!*
 Everything's supposed to be
    enjoyable!)

The coal miner's face as he
goes down in the cage with the
other miners, sons and
grandsons of miners, maybe
born coal-blackened, is not the face of someone
enjoying himself, but he knows one

truth in the total array of this creation, and that one
is all-embracing in its
human implications, and it is the

grimness of one side of our life, like the
side of the moon no
light ever touches, pitted and
scarred, and it is

not all of life, but it is the
bleakness of hardship, it is the

sore muscles and short breath of human exertion.
this band of the fast that
imposes itself like iron through the lighter
fabric of our life, and shows us a

truth, and I

have to endure it, and there is

reward for enduring it, almost

palpable *during* enduring it,

uphill or not, as in the

uphill exertion of actually

getting up from my nap, pulling my

trousers on and waiting another

hour to break the fast.

Not easy or fun
working all week, through the day,
bicycling home to lie down for an
hour in a kind of
body-wrack trance, then somehow

get up, until the

sunset breaks it all with that

first taste of date, that

first sip of water,

that first physical taste of the

Garden on the tongue, the strange but

total sense of well-being and the

simple surge of energy that

goes through the body from just eating

and unclenches the mind and gives it light,
and makes everything

have more light around it, and

be less grim.

3

By day we side with unfortunates –
stark landscapes, the vast
  geometric
    distances between stars.

By night we are laughing at the
feet of the Bacchanal, rolling in
  pink velvet, eating
grapes off their stems until their
    wetness glistens our
beards and chins.

Gratitude releases us from the Fire.
Habits are a mercy.
Hardship is having to face
  obligation that
  goes against the
    grain

After a moment of drought –

    rain!

25 RAMADAN

51 GOD'S GARDEN GATE

By day we side with the unfortunate,
those who have little, and it makes us live
in a stark landscape, our energy spent
doing small things, and we give

up small comforts, existing in the wide spaces
between stars, in a geometry of light.
Grim during the day, color comes into our faces
when we enter the gentle Bacchanal of night.

Then creation's natural feast lets loose its floods
which circulate in streams in the body's beds,
day's darker starkness enters brighter moods.
Our hearts are open, brightness frees our heads.

There is a tightness in fasting that makes us wait
in daily patience at God's Garden Gate.

25 RAMADAN

52 THE BATH

Soaking in a piping hot bath, to draw the toxins out –
  Out toxins! From lung-crust, bone-sludge,
stomach-lining purified by these days of fasting,
monsters with weird heads and
  segmented bodies too tiny to see, Oh all of you,
    wriggle out this
body of mine, a water within a water – *out, out!*
into the hot surrounding wet.

In a hot bath we remember The Fire –
stuck in it, to scalding.

Purified as in smelting. So that
only the dark ore
  persist. Fool's gold turned to
    touchstone. That's the

desire. Lying in the
  bathwater, stuck in my
    body. Legs mine, stomach mine,
  sex mine, the whole
    lugubrious machine, fat, water, salt,
death. All mine.

And I think how Ramadan is an obligation upon us
like living and like dying. We can't just
  get up and
    walk away from it, no matter
how much we may want to. (The
cancer victim in Spain we spent
days and nights sitting next to, how he often wanted to
be done with it, say, *"O.K. I've learned all I'm*
  going to learn from this, now
  let's get on to something else!"
but he wasn't finished learning until the
morning we found him
  sitting up in bed, eyes
    fixed open in death's
  absolute perception.)

Obligation is what
separates us from those who refuse
to submit to obligations. Belief has its
  tax. Breath is
    one of them. Stopping our
breath, which is an
  obligation upon us, is like
trying to avoid obligations, which are like
      breathing.

One month of fasting with only a few
legal loopholes, one
territory of
obligation patiently
endured. At the
other side of it is what may be
at the
other side of death. All that
light to contend
with! All that
showering of
radiance! And how

easily we entered into this
lifetime of obligation, after the
flaming 60's, the era of
"freedom," but saw it
as a door open permanently at the
end of a visionary LSD trip, to go into
"normal life" with
light all
around it.

My whole body
tingling from a
rub with a loofa, and as I

cut it into a more
manageable size with the
  scissors, those
    hard vegetable
      fibers, I think

again of the recalcitrant
body, how
    Ramadan is all about the
      body, how it brings us

face to face with our
bodies, our singular

selves, these one-time creations
and the main
obstruction in our
  lives between our
    selves and
God. We are the
main problematic impediment before the
Face of God. And that
  impediment that is
    ourselves is our only
lever that will free us from the self's
  all en-
    compassing suction.

By obligating the self to what is beyond the
natural scope of its appetites
put on it by God, we escape its
    snares! What an

  opening! We our-
  selves with our
  many-layered
  labyrinth of
  crisscrossing
    voices and flesh-weights and
      imperfections
are the crystalline
  pure arena of
    liberation!

In our self lies our
freedom from
  self!

No warped body is so
wrenched as to be not a
clear focus for the
Light of God. But

patience is the key. And Ramadan is all about

bodily patience. Particularly

near the end, when a part of us just wants the whole thing
to be over.

Shaykh Junaid said: *"Patience is*
being patient with
patience."

Gravity pulls us
down – *for good reason!*

We couldn't live on the
moon without a
spacesuit!

The hot

bath is

nearly

done!

26 RAMADAN

53 THE BODY IS A WORLD

The body is a world where battles are waged.
The self is a ridge we have to climb.
It is dark, full of rockets, savages on rampage,
but we can't let the war repeat itself every time.

This maze with its depths crazy, heights sublime,
is the very place for perfection to openly arise.
By the mercy of God alone, like a perfect rhyme
appearing at the end of a poem by surprise.

All our weirdness comes straight right before our eyes,
all our dark secrets forgot, bad habits eased away.
We are our own perfect map through our own forest of flies
through a smoky thicket to the light of day.

This hopeless mass of flesh and personality-twitch
turns out to be our only transformational light-switch!

27 RAMADAN (morning)

54 HOLOGRAMMIC UNIVERSE

Shepherds drive their flocks
up steep sides of a blue mountain.
The midnight sun appears above their heads, bearing down
red rays at an angle onto
wooly backs.
This is all imagined. I wonder if anywhere
such an occurrence exists? It

appeared this way in my being before I
wrote it, so if my

brain is a hologram in a hologrammic universe
somewhere shepherds may be
right now driving their
flocks in some
northerly clime *(midnight sun*
with its red rays at an angle),

just as some miner many thousands of feet below the
surface of the earth, with
black-face eye-holes aglitter,
suddenly is given
enlightenment, and sings out at top
voice through the echoing passageways among

somber miners the
  rhythmic key to existence
    as he sees it, that

rings true all the way up to
Majesty's Throne.

Nothing is left out in the smallest bit.
Each flake mirrors the whole.
Each heart of us radiates
  time and space past all
    physical limitations, so that

with little effort we are at the
bottom of the sea in Neptune's kelpy Hall,
or in King Louis XVI's
  plush drawing room at the beheading hour, or with

Lindbergh alone among clouds over the
    Atlantic, or with
lost Amelia Earhart wherever she
may be – somehow

the collective
  heart of us
    knows!

27 RAMADAN (night)

55 WHAT SWEETNESS IT IS

What sweetness it is, in a
sea of bleakness, to
prostrate in the
prayer!

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said it was
the coolness of his eye.

Just about at the
edge of endurance, not wanting to do
much of anything, but having one
more prayer to do before
sunset, I stood, my
plum shirt glowing in accord with the
plum color in the
prayer mat, the
bird out of his cage, pacing back and
forth on
top, the sound of
water spray from the
kitchen somewhere in back of me, I

stood to do the
prayer, and an
immediate
sweetness
  came over me, and a

kneeling that was like the
invisible disappearing down into the
visible as I
prostrated before the

Invisible
  Presence

and felt
sane

28 RAMADAN (before sunset)

56 THE JEWELED SURFACES OF THINGS

The jeweled surfaces of things,
the limpid pools of their depths, this

room with its post-midnight quiet,
  everything leading to a
    sweet conclusion, but that
conclusion really only a wave, just as our
  own deaths are a
little more jagged wave in a
  relentless sea of
    ultimate stillness.

Looking at the earth from outer space
how less than a
wisp our heavy concerns, our
  tragic flaws are, seen as a passing glint on the
planet jewel of
earth in its
cloud-lined sphere,

how marvelously simple the whole is, the
rainforest hung with
  veils of vegetation in which
    whole tribes of

creatures propagate, much like
  in ourselves, physical
 bacterium or psychological
tendencies, fully hatched or newly exposed, hand
  over hand along the
  hanging lianas there for a
    handhold, the eccentric
edges of our
  selves where if we can get a
  good grip on a knobby protrusion we can

turn the whole thing round.

Doorways of light open up in clouds
out of which thought's express trains scream on their
way to the central capitol.

The spirit of the eagle
  appears for a
    split-second in a
child of twelve and one day

will take his
wingéd soul beyond the
  empyrean.

So much for earthly gravity.

Waves on top of waves, in a
furiously calm layering, so much

turbulence just a
shiver across the greater
bulk of the
beast, like a

bull at the edge of the
sea, grazing on the
kelp washed up at its
feet, letting out a

low roar from time to
time just to let his
cow know he's alive.

Historical waves in the heart leap skyward.
Doors in clouds are as openly transparent as
the face of someone

just breaking the fast.

The future of our lives
looks at us
just as benignly, as
deeply relaxed after

hardship, as relieved as a
child once it's born, and after the
initial shockwave looks around and is not really so
unused to its new surroundings.

The wave of the
right path
floods us
to the
Goal of all
patience.

There is no
rejection at *that*
Gate. The angelic
orders are already
assembled.

The jeweled
surfaces of things are their own
being, the

depths within their light
pools are our
ability to reflect

anything!

28 RAMADAN

57 COLOR OF AIR

After all, what is a sonnet,
  but a few words jauntily placed.
Shoes of words fit for walking,
  a bit more tightly laced.

The melting of meaning to form
  is really something rare,
for then it's a thing, itself alone,
  like the color of air.

28 RAMADAN

58 EMPTY CHAIRS

Nearing the end of Ramadan, we are
faced with the prospect of returning to
"normal" existence, like
astronauts getting used to their
earth legs after a
short but
other-dimensional orbit.

And our orbit was in
God's precincts, and by His
power.

Not to get up at 3:00 in the morning to
eat breakfast, crunchy
granola with
lots of milk, yogurt and
English muffins in the surrounding
darkness, a
point of light over the
oilcloth tablecloth at such a
fisherman's hour for
eating, not to

brave the day, then
  bicycle home at the
    leisurely pace of the
painful elderly, to
stretch out for an
  hour's nap before
    sunset, the

disjointedness that is
like living on the other side of a
  long pane of glass, like seeing once

in Morocco during Ramadan when
everyone was fasting, streets
  empty, sidewalk
    restaurants a
  sea of empty chairs, but passed one
where a single woman, more blond because
  scarfless,
totally alone in a
  huge outdoor restaurant, was being
    dutifully served by a
    white-jacketed Moroccan waiter in the
European section of town, and how
  strange and

alien she may have felt, surrounded by –
  to her mind, perhaps –
  starving "heathens" and empty
chairs, not
knowing the majestic secret passageways some of them
travel in their
  endurance for
    God's sake,

and so it is with our
opposite world to
this one, we almost

look back at familiar
surroundings through
one-way glass during this

month of fasting, it is
almost a glimpse from the
Next World at the

slow-motion follies of
  this one!

29 RAMADAN

59 A STRONG DESIRE FOR GREEN

A strong desire for green,
  forests or emerald pools,
to live in a green domain
  in the mind like tracery spools

to be played out anywhere
  and so bring a landscape to life,
and to live in it in fair
  or foul weather, alone or with wife

and children, admittedly romantic,
  (in the city sphere a vision),
to see in the seed something gigantic
  that makes in our death an incision

to release a green and primordial urge
to join with this earth's
    primordial surge!

29 RAMADAN

60 IN GOD'S TERRITORIES

In God's territories
  the humble lover approaches cautiously.
Careful of the
  slightest courtesy, mindful of his own
    humility especially
when there are
  Lights. Radially
outpouring from that
    Source. Palely

his own face glows in the greater
  radiance. And when the

moth ignites he throws off
  all restraint, whirls
    dizzily to the
      epicenter of the
heat and light he
    sought, having so
      longed for it, having so

set out when he did at the
exact point of his first
  setting-out,

careless of his clothes, having packed only his
own bones in their case, and the

key in his lungs to the
longed-for knowledge.

Breath inspires each creature living in this sphere.
It is the undulating wave that makes
  everything cohere.

We are an assemblage of total
  harmony, even when
in need of repair. for then we are with

night's uncertainties until we are
  cured into broad daylight, this

brief moment of physical existence between two
deep-intoning darknesses.

At the center of creation is a
  sickness only

God can
  cure.

30 RAMADAN (night)

61 FEELING SICK

I don't feel so good.

I should be in bed.

In the kitchen where I write
the clock ticks

in a stereophonic circle

around my head.

30 RAMADÁN

62 RAMADAN IS OVER

Ramadan is over, and I'll miss its strange intensity.
Dry mountains suddenly flower
purged of their pent-up poisons.

The air is the same, an
  airplane
    growling through it
overhead. Underfoot the same earth
slowly spins, but

with this month of time spliced neatly into our
timeframe there's a
  renewal, a re-
    awakening to our
      human strengths and
frailties, and the

sweet taste of relief that comes as a
friend. Such a wind

blows through palm trees at the edge of a sleepless sea,
such a powerful link-up with time
  past and time future, with

long marches, endurance of prisoners of
conscience, famine, sudden

calamities on high snow mountain peaks when
storms from nowhere force climbers into a snow-cave with
few supplies and only the
  warmth of each other's bodies to
    stay alive –

images press forward, faces and thoughts of
people pushed to their limits
flood forward from their being where they are

to our Ramadan apprehension
in the luxury of our normal surroundings

with the Fast ordered from God through His
Prophet, peace be upon him, so that it has the
total weight and ring of
Divine obligation, the
  daily observance, and the
    celestial gifts at the end

which come as
  abundantly as

dots of light in
  space all around us

as we walk with our
faces turning left and right

at new worlds
springing to
  life

all around us
  as we

go.

I SHAWWAL

63 NEW MOON

How strange that it's all based on the sighting
  of the slightest
    sliver of the moon!
The whole sky veils it then, only the
  curved edge, like the
    rim of a silver glass, can be
barely seen, yet it

signals the
beginning and
  end of the Fast!

We go out looking for it, but what we're
looking for is only a
  thin rind of light, no big

structure of stars or full-moon's totally
visible target, nor yet the

biliously glowing fireball of the
  sun, but only the
    hair-curve of that
  dead reflective body, magnetic

mirror companion to earth, pocked
corpse of weird desolation, to us

brilliant Klieg when bulbous, but such a

spectral delicacy when new, so

furtive in so much
sundown (where it usually

is at the
start and
end of each
lunar month), and it is this

subtlety we are commanded to
    seek, this beautiful
  uncertainty, known for sure really

only by God, that

signals to us

as clear a renunciation of
earth-life as death is, as

clear a reflection of our sliver-thin

mortality as not
eating is, so that our

days are made more
transparent on earth, so that we

too are made

more transparent.

1 SHAWWAL
2:28 AM

FINAL SONNET

From moon to moon the months go floating by,
one set for pilgrimage, one set for fasting.
Filmy pictures of our lives pass like a fly
buzzing out a window. Only God's True Face is lasting.

Once a month or minute goes it can't come back.
Memory calls up fuzzy pictures, but the taste is gone.
Water trickles through wide fingers, but hands don't lack,
in slipping moisture, the always present moment to fasten on.

The present moment, mountain high, moonlight clear,
rises through the valley clouds of circumstance.
All altitudes are possible, all cliffs as sheer
as glass, or scenery gorgeous as a glance

in passing at a picturesque scene, *quick flash!*
God's Face stays. Our moments turn to moonlit ash.

6/11/86

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in 1940 in Oakland, California, Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore's first book of poems, *Dawn Visions*, was published by Lawrence Ferlinghetti of City Lights Books, San Francisco, in 1964, and the second in 1972, *Burnt Heart / An Ode to the War Dead*. He created and directed *The Floating Lotus Magic Opera Company* in Berkeley, California in the late 60s, and presented two major productions, *The Walls Are Running Blood*, and *Bliss Apocalypse*. He became a Sufi Muslim in 1970, performed the Hajj in 1972, and lived and traveled throughout Morocco, Spain, Algeria and Nigeria, landing in California and publishing *The Desert is the Only Way Out*, and *Chronicles of Akhira* in the early 80s (Zilzal Press). Living in Philadelphia since 1990, in 1996 he published *The Ramadan Sonnets* (Jusoor / City Lights), and in 2002, *The Blind Beekeeper* (Jusoor / Syracuse University Press). He has been the major editor for a number of works, including *The Burdah* of Shaykh Busiri, translated by Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, and the poetry of Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish, translated by Munir Akash. He is also widely published on the worldwide web: *The American Muslim*, *DeenPort*, and his own website, among others: www.danielmoorepoetry.com. He is presently (2005) bringing out The Ecstatic Exchange Series of his works, beginning with *Mars & Beyond*, *Laughing Buddha Weeping Sufi*, *Salt Prayers*, and the revised second edition of *Ramadan Sonnets*.

POETIC WORKS BY DANIEL ABDAL-HAYY MOORE

Published and Unpublished
(many to appear in the ECSTATIC EXCHANGE SERIES)

Dawn Visions (published by City Lights, 1964)
Burnt Heart/Ode to the War Dead (published by City Lights, 1972)
This Body of Black Light Gone Through the Diamond (printed by Fred Stone, Cambridge, Mass, 1965)
On The Streets at Night Alone – 1965 (?)
All Hail the Surgical Lamp – 1967
States of Amazement – 1970

The Chronicles of Akhira (1981) (published by Zilzal Press with Typoglyphs by Karl Kempton. 1986)
Mouloud (1984) (A Zilzal Press chapbook, 1995)
Man is the Crown of Creation (1984)
The Look of the Lion (The Parabolas of Sight) (1984)
The Desert is the Only Way Out (completed 4/21/84) (Zilzal Press chapbook, 1985)
Atomic Dance (1984) (am here books, 1988)
Outlandish Tales (1984)
Awake as Never Before (12/26/84) (Zilzal Press chapbook, 1993)
Glorious Intervals (1/1/85) (Zilzal Press chapbook, ?)
Long Days on Earth/Book I (1/28 – 8/30/85)
Long Days on Earth/Book II (Hayy Ibn Yaqzan) (1985)
Long Days on Earth/Book III (1/22/86)
Long Days on Earth/Book IV (1986)
The Ramadan Sonnets (Long Days on Earth/Book V) (5/9 –6/11/86) (Published by Jusoor/City Lights Books, 1996), (Republished as Ramadan Sonnets by the Ecstatic Exchange 2005)
Long Days on Earth/Book VI (6-8/30/86)
Holograms (9/4/86 – 3/26/87)
History of the World (The Epic of Man's Survival) (4/7 – 6/18/87)
Exploratory Odes (6/25 – 11/3/87)
The Man at the End of the World (11/11 – 3/21/88)
The Perfect Orchestra (3/30 – 7/25/88)
Fed from Underground Springs (7/30 – 11/23/88)
Ideas of the Heart (11/27/88 – 5/5/89)
New Poems (scattered poems, out of series, from 3/24 – 8/9/89)
Facing Mecca (5/16 – 11/11/89)
A Maddening Disregard for the Passage of Time (11/17/89 - 5/20/90)

The Heart Falls in Love with Visions of Perfection (6/15/90 – 6/2/91)
Like When You Wave at a Train and the Train Hoots Back at You (Farid's Book) (6/11 – 7/26/91)
Orpheus Meets Morpheus (8/1/91 – 3/14/92)
The Puzzle (3/21/92 – 8/17/93)
The Greater Vehicle (10/17/93 – 4/30/94)
A Hundred Little 3-D Pictures (5/14/94 – 9/11/95)
The Angel Broadcast (9/29 – 12/17/95)
Mecca/Medina Time-Warp (12/19/95 – 1/6/96) (Published as a Zilzal Press chapbook, 1996)
Miracle Songs for the Millennium (1/20 – 10/16/96)
The Blind Beekeeper (11/15/96 – 5/30/97) (Published 2002 by Jusoor/Syracuse University Press)
Chants for the Beauty Feast (6/3 – 10/28/97)
Open Doors (10/29/97 – 5/23/98)
Salt Prayers (5/29 – 10/24/98)
Some (10/25/98 – 4/25/99)
Flight to Egypt (5/1 – 5/16/99)
I Imagine a Lion (5/21 – 11/15/99)
Millennial Prognostications (11/25/99 – 2/2/2000)
The Book of Infinite Beauty (2/4 – 10/8/2000)
Blood Songs (10/9/2000 – 4/3/2001)
The Music Space (4/10 – 9/16/2001)
Where Death Goes (9/20/2001 – 5/1/2002)
The Flame of Transformation Turns to Light (99 Ghazals Written in English) (5/2 – 6/29/2002)
Through Rose-Colored Glasses (7/22/2002 – 1/15/2003)
Psalms for the Broken-Hearted (1/22 – 5/25/2003)
Hoopoe's Argument (5/27 – 9/18/03)
Love is a Letter Burning in a High Wind (9/21 – 11/6/2003)
Laughing Buddha/Weeping Sufi (11/7/2003 – 1/10/2004) (published 2005 by The Ecstatic Exchange)
Mars and Beyond (1/20 – 3/29/2004) (published 2005 by The Ecstatic Exchange)
Underwater Galaxies (4/5 – 7/21/2004)
Cooked Oranges (7/23/2004 – 1/24/2005
Holiday from the Perfect Crime (1/25 – 6/11/2005)
Stories Too Fiery to Sing Too Watery to Whisper (6/13/2005 –)

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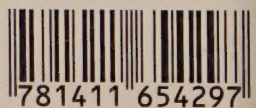

Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore

RAMADAN SONNETS, not always a spiritual meditation, nor often even what *should* be felt and achieved in the fast (the poems are striving for some reality of feeling and experience), these poems are an imaginatively inspired record of the month, its small epiphanies and grim endurances, heading out from its physical constraints to contemplate a vast panorama, or focusing in on particulars, those embryos of explosive meaning, to evoke the blessed month of Ramadan's intertwining flavors of asceticism and sensual gratitude, its palatable and palpable Light.

PRAISE FOR RAMADAN SONNETS

Moore is disturbing. If we want him to be a Muslim poet, he leads us through the winding alleyways and open deserts of Islam, letting us imbibe its perfumes—but then he turns and takes us into the American beat Ferlinghetti underground. Or if we want to go with him—on the road—with a howl—he'll show us city lights, but then he whirls and sends us, heads facing down, bodies prostrate on carpets, spirits flying, toward Mecca and beyond… To read Moore is to journey. Going with him we ask, "Where are we? What world? What America? Who is a Muslim? Who am I?" Strange places, but Moore's is a sure hand on the reins, making the Ramadan Sonnets a pilgrim's guide to the exploration of intercultural, traditional and ultra-postmodern transpersonal space.

—PROFESSOR ALAN ʿABDAL-HAQQ GODLAS

Poet's pens soar when they are free but disappear when they are effective. Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore's poems soar long after the ink has dried and the pen lifted. From feasts in Fez to desserts in the desert, Abdal-Hayy takes us on a trip of which the best guide happens to be a consummate poet. He is that guide.

—SHAYKH HAMZA YUSUF HANSON

Anyone who dives into the essence of a religion gets sweetness from it. That's what I feel in this poetry. Daniel Moore has combined the strong and spontaneous strain of American free verse that flows up through Whitman, Williams and Ginsberg with the deep well of his Islamic devotion. The blending is a unique and very tasty series of fasting poems! He's definitely located the water table.

—COLEMAN BARKS

The litany of the beautiful Ramadan Sonnets may seem to be opposed [illegible] of Khayyam's Rubaiyat, yet its aim may be the same: *Liberation.*

—LAWRENCE FERLI[illegible]I

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